GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:385
ANSWERED ON:09.04.2003
HARASSMENT OF IT PROFESSIONALS
PUTTASWAMY GOWDA;SHYAMA SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Indians, including IT professionals were detained and harassed by the police in Malaysia and London recently;

(b) if so, the details of the facts regarding the said matter;

(c) whether the Government have taken up the issued with the authorities concerned;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to prevent such incidents?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA)

(a) - (e) A statement is placed on the Table of the House

Statement referred to in parts (a) - (e) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No.385 to be answered on 9.4.2003 regarding harassment of IT professionals

Malaysia

On March 9, 2003, 195 Indian IT professionals were detained by the Malaysian Police for questioning about their visa status.The matter was taken up strongly with Malaysian authorities that led to the release of 185 of them the same day, seven more subsequently and remaining three deported since on charges of overstay. Malaysian leaders, including Acting Prime Minister, have expressed regret and apologized over the incident.

Government of India has conveyed the seriousness with which it views such incidents.

London

On 26th March 2003, based on an extradition order from the Dutch authorities, Mr. Senthil Kumar, CEO of i-Flex was arrested in London by the UK Police.Though no formal communication to the company from the Dutch authorities on the charges against the i-Flex has been received, suspicion of illegal employment and avoiding mandatory taxation has been mentioned as the reason for the detention by a Press Release issued by the Dutch Embassy in New Delhi.

Government has strongly taken up this matter with the Dutch and UK authorities, both in New Delhi and The Hague and London. Government of India has rejected these arguments. It sees this case as an example of economic protectionism. Mr. Senthil Kumar has been released on bail by a London Court on 2nd April 2003.

Government is in continuous contact with the Governments of UK and Netherlands to ensure that the Interpol Order seeking to extradite Mr. Kumar to Netherlands is withdrawn.